



New momentum needed to boost social integration – UN



Leslie Kojo Christian, Chairman of the Commission for Social Development, briefs the media

3 February 2010 – Progress on achieving greater social integration as envisioned in a landmark declaration in 1995 has been mixed, the head of the United Nations social development commission said today, calling for accelerated efforts to boost the participation of the world's most vulnerable groups in decision-making processes.

Governments met in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1995 at the [World Summit for Social Development](#), which produced a [Declaration](#) and a [Programme of Action](#). Those texts called for the elimination of poverty, the promotion of productive employment, the creation of socially integrated societies, inevitably involving large numbers of policies, implementation strategies and coordinators.

Although strides have been made in the past 15 years, including the adoption of global pacts to promote the integration of indigenous peoples and women, "we remain far from realizing the Copenhagen vision," Leslie Kojo Christian of Ghana, Chairman of the [Commission for Social Development](#), whose annual session kicked off today, told reporters.

"There are still millions of people unable to meet their basic needs and who remain disempowered and voiceless," he underscored.

This is partly due, Mr. Christian said, to policies pertaining to social integration being developed on a piecemeal basis "with limited participation by the affected groups in the design and monitoring of policies relating to their well-being."

During its 10-day session, which is focusing on social integration, the Commission endeavours to adopt a resolution to help guide governments as they formulate policies to build more inclusive societies.

The 46-member body, the Chairman said, seeks to "make a difference in the lives of people, especially the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups."

He emphasized that in a climate rocked by financial insecurity and climate change, "the stakes are high but the need is even greater" to take action to combat persistent social exclusion.

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